

# NEWS RELEASE

Indiana Criminal Justice Institute



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### ***“Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.”***

#### ***Law enforcement officers will work overtime to remove impaired drivers from Indiana’s roadways***

INDIANAPOLIS, IN. – With thousands of people expected to travel on Indiana’s roadways this Labor Day holiday, law enforcement will be out enforcing the state’s impaired driving laws. Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI) Executive Director, Mike Cunegin announced today that approximately 250 law enforcement agencies funded by ICJI, will conduct sobriety checkpoints and saturation patrols in order to detect and ultimately arrest impaired drivers.

“We are not deploying this statewide crackdown to discourage individuals from having a good time while celebrating the holiday,” said Cunegin. “We want to strongly urge anyone who plans to consume alcohol to act responsibly and to designate a sober driver before they begin to drink.”

According to data released yesterday by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2006, Indiana ranked eighth in the nation (36%) for having the lowest percentage of 0.01 or higher alcohol-related fatalities. In 2006, Indiana showed a three-percent (247) decrease in crashes involving a driver who had a BAC of 0.08 or higher.

“It saddens me that those 247 deaths were entirely preventable had the motorist who drank simply not have gotten behind the wheel,” said Ryan Klitzsch, Traffic Safety division director at ICJI.

Impaired driving is one of America’s deadliest crimes. In fact, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2005, more than 16,800 citizens lost their lives in alcohol-related traffic crashes. Of those fatalities nearly 13,000 involved an impaired driver or motorcycle operator with an illegal blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher.

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“We are proud to partner with law enforcement and the Governor’s Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving during this high visibility crackdown to reduce the number of people that are tragically killed and injured by drunk drivers,” said Kitty Greene, executive director, Indiana Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

“Drunk driving is a serious public health issue that affects all Hoosiers. It is particularly sad to see its negative impact on young people,” said State Health Commissioner Judy Monroe, M.D. “According to the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, two-thirds of fatally injured children were riding with drivers who were under the influence of alcohol. We owe it to the young people of this state to make our roads safer.”

The national “*Drunk Driving. Over the Limit. Under Arrest.*” enforcement crackdown is a comprehensive impaired driving initiative organized by the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The campaign combines high-visibility enforcement with heightened public awareness through intense advertising and publicity.

The Governor’s Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving reminds everyone:

- Be responsible and don’t risk it ... you will be caught.
- If you plan to drink, choose a designated driver before going out.
- Take mass transit, a taxicab, or ask a sober friend to drive you home.
- Spend the night where the activity is being held.
- Report impaired drivers to law enforcement.
- Always buckle up – it’s your best defense against an impaired driver.

*The Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving serves as the public opinion catalyst and the implementing body for statewide action to reduce death and injury on Indiana roadways. The Council provides grant funding, training, coordination and ongoing support to state and local traffic safety advocates.*

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